10:Hasluck F-5 (1926-1939)1954 EGl Albania EGl

man killed in the murderer's stead must not be too old, feeble-minded, or physically frail to carry arms, for such men were counted women, and women could not be killed in blood feuds. If the avenger killed such a man, he lost caste, was publicly branded as 'low-class' and made it certain that the feud would not be closed. It was also illegal to kill boys who were still too young to carry arms, that is to say, under fifteen or in some cases twenty. In the Malësi e Madhe, however, it was held that one must take vengeance where one could, and that in default of an adult enemy one might kill a boy. Even in that region such a crime was not committed except by a very bad man or one who was frenzied with rage at the recent murder of a relative or otherwise. For instance, in 1933 a subaltern of the Alije family, whose wife had been carried off by another Dibran, refrained for some years from avenging the insult in the way demanded by mountain law. Taunted with this restraint at a chance meeting in a café, he put aside the civilization acquired during his military education in Albania and in Italy and rushed for his revolver. As he was unable to find the man who had taunted him, he lay in wait for the latter's schoolboy son, aged fourteen, and shot him dead.

The men of Shalë said that vengeance on a boy was commoner in Pult than in their own tribe; the men of Pult, they added contemptuously, were in every way their inferiors. Much the same was said by the tribesmen of Lurë of their neighbours in Mirditë and Kthellë, who returned the compliment in kind. In Lumë a man who took such vengeance was never again given the greeting 'Peace be with thee', which is every good Mohammedan's due from his fellows. The manner of such vengeance was inevitably very brutal. Thus two men from Shlak, when working in Bardhanjol, found the small son of their enemy and tore him in two; they are said not to have troubled to kill him first. More often the enemy wrenched the cradle off a woman's back and in her presence cut the infant's throat. A particularly nasty case was reported about 1932 from Shalë, one of the most backward regions of Albania. While two families were quarrelling about a piece of land, the wife of Grimës one day voiced her opinions so volubly in Gjelosh's house that he lost his temper and pushed her out. She fell down some steps by the door and bruised her hip. She showed the bruise to the gendarmerie, who were sympathetic enough to arrest Gjelosh and to imprison him for three months. The woman, who cared more

2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1
Historical Yugoslavia EF2
Serbs EP6

Some Balkan Taboos. Iron. Hair

In the Pulati mountains the head is often shaved, except for the perchin. A 302

In olden days a boy did not rank as a male till his head had been shaved. This was not done till after the ceremony of the first hair-cutting, described above. When once shaved he could be killed for blood-vengeance as male blood of the tribe. A 302 554 885

Mothers would defer the head-shave if they could for a year or two in consequence, but it was a practice not approved of.

The heads of both girls and boys are shaved in the mountains, and a fringe is left over the girl's forehead. A 302

When I was in Kosovo vilayet in 1908 I found that among the scattered Serbian peasants the heads of both girls and boys were S 302

A [302]

FIG. 23.—VARIETIES OF ALBANIAN HEAD-SHAVES

shaved. Both had a perchin, and the girls a fringe over the forehead. So soon as the girl was betrothed her hair was allowed to grow. In the rare case of her remaining unmarried I was told she would keep her head shaved. S 584 554

In the Albanian mountains, where the girls were betrothed as children, I found the hair was not allowed to grow till they were marriageable. A 584 302

Wood-ash and water in the mountains is the usual shaving mixture. Even in civilized places methods were sometimes barbaric. I watched a barber, who stood at the gates of Ragusa on a market-day, inviting incoming peasants to indulge in a shave before entering the town. The patient sat cross-legged on the ground. The barber gripped his head between his knees, spat freely on the razor blade, and set to work. A H 302